

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 860

To amend title 28, United States Code, to allow a judge to whom a case is transferred to retain jurisdiction over certain multidistrict litigation cases for trial, and to provide for Federal jurisdiction of certain multiparty, multiforum civil actions.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 6, 2001

Mr. SENSENBRENNER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To amend title 28, United States Code, to allow a judge to whom a case is transferred to retain jurisdiction over certain multidistrict litigation cases for trial, and to provide for Federal jurisdiction of certain multiparty, multiforum civil actions.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Multidistrict,
5 Multiparty, Multiforum Trial Jurisdiction Act of 2001”.

1 **SEC. 2. MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION.**

2 Section 1407 of title 28, United States Code, is
3 amended—

4 (1) in the third sentence of subsection (a), by
5 inserting “or ordered transferred to the transferee
6 or other district under subsection (i)” after “termi-
7 nated”; and

8 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
9 section:

10 “(i)(1) Subject to paragraph (2) and except as pro-
11 vided in subsection (j), any action transferred under this
12 section by the panel may be transferred for trial purposes,
13 by the judge or judges of the transferee district to whom
14 the action was assigned, to the transferee or other district
15 in the interest of justice and for the convenience of the
16 parties and witnesses.

17 “(2) Any action transferred for trial purposes under
18 paragraph (1) shall be remanded by the panel for the de-
19 termination of compensatory damages to the district court
20 from which it was transferred, unless the court to which
21 the action has been transferred for trial purposes also
22 finds, for the convenience of the parties and witnesses and
23 in the interests of justice, that the action should be re-
24 tained for the determination of compensatory damages.”.

1 **SEC. 3. MULTIPARTY, MULTIFORUM JURISDICTION OF DIS-**
2 **TRICT COURTS.**

3 (a) BASIS OF JURISDICTION.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 85 of title 28,
5 United States Code, is amended by adding at the
6 end the following new section:

7 **“§ 1369. Multiparty, multiform jurisdiction**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The district courts shall have
9 original jurisdiction of any civil action involving minimal
10 diversity between adverse parties that arises from a single
11 accident, where at least 25 natural persons have either
12 died or incurred injury in the accident at a discrete loca-
13 tion and, in the case of injury, the injury has resulted in
14 damages which exceed \$150,000 per person, exclusive of
15 interest and costs, if—

16 “(1) a defendant resides in a State and a sub-
17 stantial part of the accident took place in another
18 State or other location, regardless of whether that
19 defendant is also a resident of the State where a
20 substantial part of the accident took place;

21 “(2) any two defendants reside in different
22 States, regardless of whether such defendants are
23 also residents of the same State or States; or

24 “(3) substantial parts of the accident took place
25 in different States.

1 “(b) LIMITATION OF JURISDICTION OF DISTRICT
2 COURTS.—The district court shall abstain from hearing
3 any civil action described in subsection (a) in which—

4 “(1) the substantial majority of all plaintiffs
5 are citizens of a single State of which the primary
6 defendants are also citizens; and

7 “(2) the claims asserted will be governed pri-
8 marily by the laws of that State.

9 “(c) SPECIAL RULES AND DEFINITIONS.—For pur-
10 poses of this section—

11 “(1) minimal diversity exists between adverse
12 parties if any party is a citizen of a State and any
13 adverse party is a citizen of another State, a citizen
14 or subject of a foreign state, or a foreign state as
15 defined in section 1603(a) of this title;

16 “(2) a corporation is deemed to be a citizen of
17 any State, and a citizen or subject of any foreign
18 state, in which it is incorporated or has its principal
19 place of business, and is deemed to be a resident of
20 any State in which it is incorporated or licensed to
21 do business or is doing business;

22 “(3) the term ‘injury’ means—

23 “(A) physical harm to a natural person;
24 and

1 “(B) physical damage to or destruction of
2 tangible property, but only if physical harm de-
3 scribed in subparagraph (A) exists;

4 “(4) the term ‘accident’ means a sudden acci-
5 dent, or a natural event culminating in an accident,
6 that results in death or injury incurred at a discrete
7 location by at least 25 natural persons; and

8 “(5) the term ‘State’ includes the District of
9 Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and
10 any territory or possession of the United States.

11 “(d) INTERVENING PARTIES.—In any action in a dis-
12 trict court which is or could have been brought, in whole
13 or in part, under this section, any person with a claim
14 arising from the accident described in subsection (a) shall
15 be permitted to intervene as a party plaintiff in the action,
16 even if that person could not have brought an action in
17 a district court as an original matter.

18 “(e) NOTIFICATION OF JUDICIAL PANEL ON MULTI-
19 DISTRICT LITIGATION.—A district court in which an ac-
20 tion under this section is pending shall promptly notify
21 the judicial panel on multidistrict litigation of the pend-
22 ency of the action.”.

23 “(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of
24 sections at the beginning of chapter 85 of title 28,

1 United States Code, is amended by adding at the
2 end the following new item:

“1369. Multiparty, multiform jurisdiction.”.

3 (b) VENUE.—Section 1391 of title 28, United States
4 Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

5 “(g) A civil action in which jurisdiction of the district
6 court is based upon section 1369 of this title may be
7 brought in any district in which any defendant resides or
8 in which a substantial part of the accident giving rise to
9 the action took place.”.

10 (c) MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION.—Section 1407 of
11 title 28, United States Code, as amended by section 2 of
12 this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the fol-
13 lowing:

14 “(j)(1) In actions transferred under this section when
15 jurisdiction is or could have been based, in whole or in
16 part, on section 1369 of this title, the transferee district
17 court may, notwithstanding any other provision of this
18 section, retain actions so transferred for the determination
19 of liability and punitive damages. An action retained for
20 the determination of liability shall be remanded to the dis-
21 trict court from which the action was transferred, or to
22 the State court from which the action was removed, for
23 the determination of damages, other than punitive dam-
24 ages, unless the court finds, for the convenience of parties

1 and witnesses and in the interest of justice, that the action
2 should be retained for the determination of damages.

3 “(2) Any remand under paragraph (1) shall not be
4 effective until 60 days after the transferee court has
5 issued an order determining liability and has certified its
6 intention to remand some or all of the transferred actions
7 for the determination of damages. An appeal with respect
8 to the liability determination and the choice of law deter-
9 mination of the transferee court may be taken during that
10 60-day period to the court of appeals with appellate juris-
11 diction over the transferee court. In the event a party files
12 such an appeal, the remand shall not be effective until the
13 appeal has been finally disposed of. Once the remand has
14 become effective, the liability determination and the choice
15 of law determination shall not be subject to further review
16 by appeal or otherwise.

17 “(3) An appeal with respect to determination of puni-
18 tive damages by the transferee court may be taken, during
19 the 60-day period beginning on the date the order making
20 the determination is issued, to the court of appeals with
21 jurisdiction over the transferee court.

22 “(4) Any decision under this subsection concerning
23 remand for the determination of damages shall not be re-
24 viewable by appeal or otherwise.

1 “(5) Nothing in this subsection shall restrict the au-
2 thority of the transferee court to transfer or dismiss an
3 action on the ground of inconvenient forum.”.

4 (d) REMOVAL OF ACTIONS.—Section 1441 of title 28,
5 United States Code, is amended—

6 (1) in subsection (e) by striking “(e) The court
7 to which such civil action is removed” and inserting
8 “(f) The court to which a civil action is removed
9 under this section”; and

10 (2) by inserting after subsection (d) the fol-
11 lowing new subsection:

12 “(e)(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection
13 (b) of this section, a defendant in a civil action in a State
14 court may remove the action to the district court of the
15 United States for the district and division embracing the
16 place where the action is pending if—

17 “(A) the action could have been brought in a
18 United States district court under section 1369 of
19 this title; or

20 “(B) the defendant is a party to an action
21 which is or could have been brought, in whole or in
22 part, under section 1369 in a United States district
23 court and arises from the same accident as the ac-
24 tion in State court, even if the action to be removed

1 could not have been brought in a district court as
2 an original matter.

3 The removal of an action under this subsection shall be
4 made in accordance with section 1446 of this title, except
5 that a notice of removal may also be filed before trial of
6 the action in State court within 30 days after the date
7 on which the defendant first becomes a party to an action
8 under section 1369 in a United States district court that
9 arises from the same accident as the action in State court,
10 or at a later time with leave of the district court.

11 “(2) Whenever an action is removed under this sub-
12 section and the district court to which it is removed or
13 transferred under section 1407(j) has made a liability de-
14 termination requiring further proceedings as to damages,
15 the district court shall remand the action to the State
16 court from which it had been removed for the determina-
17 tion of damages, unless the court finds that, for the con-
18 venience of parties and witnesses and in the interest of
19 justice, the action should be retained for the determination
20 of damages.

21 “(3) Any remand under paragraph (2) shall not be
22 effective until 60 days after the district court has issued
23 an order determining liability and has certified its inten-
24 tion to remand the removed action for the determination
25 of damages. An appeal with respect to the liability deter-

1 mination and the choice of law determination of the dis-
2 trict court may be taken during that 60-day period to the
3 court of appeals with appellate jurisdiction over the dis-
4 trict court. In the event a party files such an appeal, the
5 remand shall not be effective until the appeal has been
6 finally disposed of. Once the remand has become effective,
7 the liability determination and the choice of law deter-
8 mination shall not be subject to further review by appeal
9 or otherwise.

10 “(4) Any decision under this subsection concerning
11 remand for the determination of damages shall not be re-
12 viewable by appeal or otherwise.

13 “(5) An action removed under this subsection shall
14 be deemed to be an action under section 1369 and an ac-
15 tion in which jurisdiction is based on section 1368 of this
16 title for purposes of this section and sections 1407, 1660,
17 1697, and 1785 of this title.

18 “(6) Nothing in this subsection shall restrict the au-
19 thority of the district court to transfer or dismiss an ac-
20 tion on the ground of inconvenient forum.”.

21 (e) SERVICE OF PROCESS.—

22 (1) OTHER THAN SUBPOENAS.—(A) Chapter
23 113 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by
24 adding at the end the following new section:

1 **“§ 1697. Service in multiparty, multiform actions**

2 “When the jurisdiction of the district court is based
3 in whole or in part upon section 1369 of this title, process,
4 other than subpoenas, may be served at any place within
5 the United States, or anywhere outside the United States
6 if otherwise permitted by law.”.

7 (B) The table of sections at the beginning of
8 chapter 113 of title 28, United States Code, is
9 amended by adding at the end the following new
10 item:

“1697. Service in multiparty, multiform actions.”.

11 (2) SERVICE OF SUBPOENAS.—(A) Chapter 117
12 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by add-
13 ing at the end the following new section:

14 **“§ 1785. Subpoenas in multiparty, multiform actions**

15 “When the jurisdiction of the district court is based
16 in whole or in part upon section 1369 of this title, a sub-
17 poena for attendance at a hearing or trial may, if author-
18 ized by the court upon motion for good cause shown, and
19 upon such terms and conditions as the court may impose,
20 be served at any place within the United States, or any-
21 where outside the United States if otherwise permitted by
22 law.”.

23 (B) The table of sections at the beginning of
24 chapter 117 of title 28, United States Code, is

1 amended by adding at the end the following new
2 item:

“1785. Subpoenas in multiparty, multiform actions.”.

3 **SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

4 (a) SECTION 2.—The amendments made by section
5 2 shall apply to any civil action pending on or brought
6 on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

7 (b) SECTION 3.—The amendments made by section
8 3 shall apply to a civil action if the accident giving rise
9 to the cause of action occurred on or after the 90th day
10 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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